

STORYTELLING TO PROMOTE SPEAKING SKILLS IN SECOND GRADE

BY

DIEGO ALEXANDER OSPINA GIL

JENNY ALEJANDRA REYES TAPASCO

SANTIAGO VALENCIA CARMONA

ADVISOR: PH.D. ROSA M. GUILLEUMAS GARCÍA

UNIVERSIDAD TECNOLÓGICA DE PEREIRA

LICENCIATURA EN BILINGÜISMO CON ÉNFASIS EN INGLÉS

FACULTAD DE BELLAS ARTES Y HUMANIDADES

PEREIRA

ENERO DE 2020

## **CONTENIDO**

1. JUSTIFICATION	1
2. OBJECTIVES	4
3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK	5
3.1 STORYTELLING	5
3.2 SPEAKING	6
3.3 SPEAKING AS A COGNITIVE PROCESS	7
3.3.1 IDENTIFYING SOME SPEAKING ISSUES	8
4. LITERATURE REVIEW	9
5. METHODOLOGY	11
5.1 CONTEXT	12
5.2 PARTICIPANTS	13
5.2.1 PRACTITIONERS	13
6. INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN	14
7. REFLECTIVE STAGE	17
7.1 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT.	17
7.1.1 CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT	18
7.2 EFFECTIVENESS OF PRESENTATION PRACTICE AND PRODUCTION PROCEDURE FOR ORAL PRODUCTION IN BEGINNERS.	22

7.2.1 VALUE OF PRAISE AND SELF-ESTEEM	23
7.2.2 STUDENTS' RESPONSES	24
7.2.3 REACTIONS DURING CLASS IMPLEMENTATION	25
7.2.4 LANGUAGE LEARNING	27
7.2.5 LINGUISTIC OUTCOMES	28
CONCLUSION	33
REFERENCES	35

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

*Firstly, I want to thank my mother, who is the most important person in my life and the one who cared about my personal and professional growth. She encouraged me and gave me support when I needed strength to continue with my degree. I got from her a positive attitude to perform my best in every step of my life.*

*Secondly, thanks to God and my father who blessed me from heaven and motivated me to become a good person, following the routes that they showed me. Finally, I want to thank my brother, my girlfriend, my thesis colleagues and the professors from the program that guided me, following up my strengths and weaknesses in my teacher's development process.*

*First of all, I would like to thank God for providing me always with the determination and strength to pursue my dreams. Also, thanks to my mother and father for giving me such important support in so many ways to accomplish this degree. I am sure that without them this achievement would not have been possible.*

*Equally important, I would like to thank my sister and my husband for always being there when I most needed them, and for their constant support and guidance pushing me to achieve all my goals. All my family members are the reason for my success.*

*Last but not least, I want to thank to my colleges, Diego and Santiago for their help, support and patience through this process. We learnt a lot from each other. Furthermore, thanks to the professors, specially to our advisor PhD. Rosa María Guilleumas for*

*sharing with us her incredible knowledge,  
advice and her professionalism.*

## **ABSTRACT**

This document describes our graduation project, which intended to demonstrate the advantage to use storytelling to promote speaking skills with young learners. This is presented in order to develop skills in the second language and thus make students competent not only for academics but also for personal development. Firstly, we worked on the main concepts in order to have a better understanding of this classroom project and work in a scaffolder way. Second, we took some studies and researches as a reference where storytelling has been applied before and the impact this practice has had throughout the times, therefore realize the impact that learners will have through this; it also will be mentioned the challenges that Colombia faces regarding the lack of English teachers for Primary school. Third, the methodology displays the route in which this project was conducted, showing the steps and procedures that were followed and the materials that were needed during the process. Finally, the results obtained during this implementation are presented in order to evidence the effectiveness and the improvements to consider that storytelling has for second graders.

## **1. JUSTIFICATION**

Nowadays, being able to communicate in English has become fundamental in order to face the needs of the current society, since this language is employed for academic, professional and personal purposes worldwide.

Based on this need, the Colombian Ministry of Education (MEN) designed the Plan Nacional de Bilingüismo, where it was stipulated that Colombian citizens should develop at least one foreign language, preferably English, and have achieved at least B1 level of proficiency according to the Common European Framework (CEF) by the time they finish their high school (11th grade). Thereby, public and private schools in the national territory adopted the teaching of English as part of the curriculum, making significant efforts in order to increase the English proficiency level of students.

Despite teachers' and institutions' efforts, students are still presenting low results of achievement in the English language subject as it is evidenced in the Pruebas SABER (Standardized Test) results collected in 2017, where English was the subject with the lowest score (50.57). These results were not surprising since a study published by Salazar & Sierra in 2017 showed that the English language proficiency level was below the target established by the Colombian Ministry of Education in the standards published in 2006.

These problems may have its roots in the Primary Educational Level, where according to the Ley General de Educación 115 de 1994, the goal of English language learning is the acquisition of conversation and reading elements at least in one foreign language. (Ley General de Educación

115 de 1994, Artículo 21). These levels establish the basis in the language that will allow learners to achieve the desired B1 level of competence when they finish the High School educational stage. However, according to Maturana (2011), English licensed teachers are assigned only to the secondary level of Colombian education while the primary stage must be attended to by teachers who, not only have to provide instruction in all areas, but are often lacking English communicative competence themselves, and have little or no qualifications to guide students in this area.

It must also be mentioned that, apart from having sufficient command of the language, teaching English as a foreign language presents different challenges, as for instance, that teachers adapt the teaching and learning materials based on *Lineamientos curriculares en lengua extranjera* (Curricular Guidelines in foreign language) and are able to implement programs such as Colombia Bilingüe and Colombia Aprende for students to reach the required level A2 in the Primary.

As Porras (2010) argues, learning English as a second language is essential from early childhood, especially oral skills since this ability is best learned in the first stages of language development and it is considered to be the most immediate communication tool. Differently, the oral skill is the one that takes more complexity to acquire overall in a mono language context that is why it is considered to implement storytelling as the main strategy to develop oral or speaking skills taking advantage of the mother tongue and their previous knowledge. On the other hand, Maturana (2011) states that it is very important to develop English strategies that allow children to become competent for the second language since their early stages and she wonders about the reason why Colombian institutions do not have specialized English language teachers who can respond to the demand of pupils starting preschool. Therefore, professional development programs are needed to provide a boost to the quality of teaching English from an early age.



This is also the situation at Institucion Educativa Suroriental where the in-service teacher had just a basic competence in the English language and cannot provide enough input to the learners. For this reason, the lessons designed by the teacher do not achieve the expected success. The relevance of our project is thus evident and it is expected that it will contribute to the development of students' English language skills.

According to Harmer (2001, p. 86) "a variation on Audiolingualism in British-based teaching and elsewhere is the procedure most often referred to as PPP which stands for presentation, practice, production" A methodological procedure that may be successful at the Primary level is Presentation Practice and Production (PPP) due to the input used and followed by simplified production which develops accuracy and complexity in scholars, especially in the silent period that they are going through. In addition, pupils acknowledge the content taught through empathy as these scenarios might have been faced by students in an authentic context, which increases their intrinsic motivation. Besides, in the after stage the students comprehend the tasks to complete thanks to scaffolding and grammar is taught inductively.

Considering all that has been explained, we propose the implementation of storytelling as a method to teach the English language to young learners in the early preschool stage. Also, learners will be able to build their knowledge with strong lexical support, which may improve their English level in the future learning stages.

Our project will contribute to the English language teaching field by presenting, implementing and assessing a didactic unit based on storytelling to foster English skills, especially oral production. It will be useful for in-service teachers and pupils as well as for educational institutions.

## **2. OBJECTIVES**

### ***2.1 TEACHING OBJECTIVES***

- To promote students' lexical competence with new vocabulary by storytelling in English.
- To design a didactic unit based on storytelling.
- Explore the possibilities of storytelling for developing foreign language competences with young learners of a public Colombian school.

### ***2.2 LEARNING OBJECTIVES***

- To understand and produce new lexical items through stories in English.
- To identify vocabulary related to popular storytelling for children.
- To understand the vocabulary of the stories.
- Use the vocabulary appropriately in oral production.
- To raise students' interest in reading and their motivation for learning English.

### **3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

#### ***3.1 STORYTELLING***

Storytelling is a method well known for English language teachers that success in learning with how learners face the process. The importance of this technique in the second language is that the educational field wonders about it. Storytelling allows teachers not only for primary schools but also for secondary schools to engage students and make learning effective by innovating in resources and activities that students could take as a challenge using elements of the language and at the same time learning with tools that transform students' perception of learning from something.

According to Dudley (1997), storytelling can be used to involve learners in multicultural education; that will allow them to create classroom communities; as a result, teachers will improve students' emotional health; enhancing children's' grasp of our social and environmental responsibilities. She also stated that storytelling is the art in which a teacher or tutor conveys a message, information, and knowledge to an audience while the population is enjoying it and can retain and understand the message conveyed.

On the other hand, storytelling is not just the way to read a book or tell a story from memory, for years people have passed this peculiar habit from time to time. From an early age, children love to hear a good story, and they love this routine when the teacher uses a cool style to engage students and catch their attention. Based on Write (1995) book, then, it will be remarked

the importance of storytelling for children and how this continual routine will enhance language skills while they increase their vocabulary.

Storytelling is a strategy that helps students to increase their oral skills, becoming learners more fluent in their speech, contributing to expand their vocabulary. Also, it is important to keep in mind that speaking is a process in which students are exposed along the course, for this reason, it is necessary to be aware that is not merely to teach and learn words, recalling, memorization, recycling but also is the way to use those words in context, how to choose the appropriate word and the use to that right word to convey and express a message and addressing others in a certain speech. Finally, this process can be carried out by using storytelling as an effective method to rise speaking skill especially in young children which is the age in which they are more receptive, where they have a high level of curiosity and where they are more expectant to storage and integrate those new words in their brain.

### ***3.2 SPEAKING***

Language is very important in human beings, as it is the mean by which people communicate in an everyday life oral interaction. Speaking skill is considered the most important competence of any English Language course. Furthermore, in a foreign language, the ability to speak is an essential skill when it provides learners the language proficiency that seeks them to achieve, due to this is the basic way of communication. Speaking is one of the skills in which it can see the productive linguistic results and allow the teachers to know how much they are involved and how competent in the foreign language. This chapter will present 3 different concepts about speaking skill highlighting the contribution of Gillis (2013), showing evidence of a cognitive

process that according to Collins and Loftus (1975) occurs naturally when students are exposed to language, and as argued by Patás (2014) how the learners are encouraged to participate by teacher's modeling the activation of speaking skill. Additionally, this process enhances the improvement in speaking skill through storytelling in young learners while they are enriching their vocabulary as it is stated by Porras (2010), making stories central to the teaching that according to Wright (1985).

It is a crucial fact that people share their everyday thinkings with others to perform accurately oral interactions in daily life situations, speaking actions conveys thoughts, understanding and feeling to listeners. Furthermore, it can help the listener understands the objectives of the speaker. Thereby, speaking skill becomes a key mean of communication. As Gillis (2013) defined Speaking as an ability that all people should develop in order to communicate and express all ideas that are thought. Also, this ability allows important advantages such as: Inform, persuade and direct; in this way people can be engaged providing the information that they want to transmit to others, turning into a challenge to choose the right words to make sentences that will be coherent in the message.

### ***3.3 SPEAKING AS A COGNITIVE PROCESS***

One of the ways to express ideas, thoughts or believes in daily life is using oral language. By doing so, people produce and receive messages that include words that are processed in our brain, a model known as the spreading activation. Collins and Loftus (1975) developed it by setting a relationship whenever a person thinks, hears or sees a concept there is a node created internally that is connected to this person's semantic memory. This mental process happens incidentally due

to natural exposure to the language. As Dell (1986) argues this represents how the way knowledge is acquired and afterward processed orally through a mental network interconnection that occurs with words, syllables, morphemes, and phonemes. Consequently, in order to produce oral skills, it would be necessary that learners will be exposed to meaningful input. Moreover, teachers' role is crucial to provide the pedagogical material that students can use to develop and improve their oral skills.

### ***3.3.1 IDENTIFYING SOME SPEAKING ISSUES***

Through a follow-up developed in an interview, there has been a weakness identified from L2 learners in speaking related to the achievement of fluency. In such a process, there was evidence that the lack of fluency was a matter of frustration and embarrassment on students' behalf. In spite of the teachers' efforts to increase speaking performance, a key factor like interactive practice could contribute to boosting fluency providing a sense of confidence and reducing the anxiety that may arise, which becomes excessive self-monitoring, also called monitor over users. To make the best use of available linguistic resources, there are diverse strategic competencies that are commonly used in communication such as circumlocution, paralinguistic, approximation or code-switching. Despite the usefulness of these strategies, students' language development turns into a fossilization step that is dependent on their strategic competence.

#### **4. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Telling stories to young students is a method that has an important role in teaching and learning the English language. As Porras. N (2010) states this method helps students to improve their English language skills while enriching vocabulary, creating passion and awareness about the importance of the use of English; also, storytelling strengthens the language structure orally. According to Mass. K (2008), students can develop empathy with the characters from the stories since the brain can make connections between facts from the story and real life. Moreover, this strategy is a useful tool to educate pupils, especially young learners, due to the fact that narrating stories teach morals that easily engage children's attention, Ellis. G (2012) suggested.

In this literature review, three studies related to the effectiveness of telling stories to teach English will be reviewed: two of them describe the use of storytelling to enrich children's English vocabulary. The studies also explain strategies that teachers could implement in the classrooms. Additionally, there is a research project that presents how future teachers could use across curriculum themes to teach morals by using children's stories.

Porras (2010), carried out a study with second and third graders in a public elementary school in Bucaramanga, Colombia during the research process students were able to create their own stories. Despite the fact that learners are from different courses, results showed some similarities between second and third graders which were: motivation in the learning process, acquisition of new words and comprehension of the stories. In addition, researchers could notice that storytelling as an English teaching method is a useful tool since pupils enjoy while learning as sessions are more meaningful for them.

On the other hand, a problem of this research was that the English language was taught for teachers with low English level so, the researcher decided to implement a pedagogical proposal called “Implementation of story reading and storytelling as a teaching tool for teaching English to young learners” using storytelling strategy as the meaningful way. The methodology was categorized as an action research project which is based on finding an issue to provide a possible solution. The project was carried out with three groups of eight people where children should write a story with a cartoon or character that they like the most and then, the stories were changed and said among groups. After the implementation of this pedagogical propose. Data date was collected through direct observation and journals. Finally, after analysis researches’ analysis concluded that in order to engage children with the second language, teachers should be careful to select the material to be used. Also, the use of storytelling as a teaching method made the language process became meaningful and interesting to learn a second language especially for young learners due to the fact that they have the ability to absorb knowledge while they have fun. In addition, this project invites teachers to use different pedagogical strategies in order to improve learners’ motivation.

Differently, Mass’ case (2008) argues that speaking is one of the most important in order to achieve that a student becomes competent in real context as students not only will improve their listening skills but also they will expand their vocabulary. So, she started to implement a research project about using storytelling to 20 pupils who were her second graders. They were from Hispanic and black decedents where Spanish was the dominant language. One of the strategies that she used was the storytelling method; first, it mentioned characters that play football; second, real childhood stories were introduced by creating empathy and making students felt comfortable.



To collect data researcher asked oral questions, preparing students to be exposed to a second language and then complete a survey with questions about a story that she told them before. To do this, the group was divided into three small groups wherein students should create a story and tell it to the rest of the group. Practicing listening and speaking in their second language allowed students to learn and expand their English vocabulary. Additionally, Mass. K (2008) found and concluded that students can learn English in an easy way by using this storytelling method because their brain can make connections with characters and they can remember structures of the language or facts that happen in the stories that could be used in real situations.

## **5. METHODOLOGY**

In this session, it will be presented the methodology implemented during the project in relation with the context and conditions of the school where it is going to be applied, the participants and the instructional design of the lesson plans, including types of activities and materials.

## ***5.1 CONTEXT***

This classroom project will be implemented at one of the public schools from Pereira-Risaralda which has an alliance with the Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira. This public school allows practitioners from Licenciatura en Bilingüismo con énfasis en Inglés to execute the practicum sessions required by the program.

This institution is quite big and has a sizable soccer field; additionally, it has 2 small fields where it is possible to play volleyball, basketball and perform other activities. The school also has a well-equipped computer room, 2 rooms with digital boards, cafeteria and a big space in the middle of the school they have named as oratory space. Classrooms have almost the same size, they do not vary each other in size difference; however, all of them are good enough to teach from 30 to 35 students and there are between 7 and 8 years old; each classroom has boards, teacher's desktop, chairs for the students and areas with good lighting.

Regarding the socioeconomic status of the students depends on the places and neighborhoods where they come from. Most of them are from medium and low socioeconomic status, and there are some others who come from vulnerable or unsafe communities in which factors such as delinquency, violence, and poverty are the main problems. This school has more than 1000 students and there is just one schedule. Moreover, they start classes from 6:30 am to 12:30 pm. This project will be implemented with the second-grade students from the primary school of the institution.

## **5.2 PARTICIPANTS**

The participants of this project will be students from “Colegio Suroriental” from second grade and three practitioners from Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira.

There are 20 girls and 13 boys from third grades who are between 8 to 9 years old.

### **5.3.1 PRACTITIONERS**

The pre-service teachers doing this project are in 9th semester in the academic program Licenciatura en Bilingüismo con énfasis en Inglés from the Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira. They will be implementing this project by the use of storytelling in order to provide tools to facilitate language learning during the implementation period and their future encounter with the English language. The roles of the pre-service teachers are to observe classes and design lesson plans that integrate basic skills highlighting the speaking one. They also will be evaluating the activities. Finally, the practitioners will identify what went well, what could be improved and what will be different in the next session. To support the results, during this process, practitioners will record videos, take pictures and write journals.

## 6. INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

The importance of the instructional design of the project is to plan and implement English classes using storytelling with classic stories to promote speaking skills on the students. A careful analysis of what happens in the class followed by the implementation of the lessons to evaluate students' responses with the content of the activities. This classroom project has a goal for the use of the English language. The aim is to present the story using the appropriate key elements that engage learners in the lesson and provide motivational elements that promote the use of the English in the classroom.

Storytelling in the EFL classroom can offer the opportunity to immerse students in a different culture; reading stories can introduce other cultural elements and traditions to young learners in a way they will find enjoyable not only in a foreign language but also around the world. It is important to mention that storytelling sessions have been implemented in the classroom, there were also implemented different English sections where students can demonstrate their knowledge and their interest to learn. For instance, they are taught to answer using appropriate language and tenses, to use the correct structures to create a simple conversation, showing their vocabulary range according to the previous knowledge.

At the beginning of the implementation, a diagnosis was implemented by the use of activities that had some vocabulary such as “what is your name?” and “what is your favorite color?” The results have shown that students did not have the expected English language knowledge for the grade they are, as defined in the guidelines from the Ministry of Education in a Foreign Language- English Guide 22. Estándares Básicos de Competencias en Lenguas Extranjeras and The Suggested Curriculum. The results from the applied diagnosis showed to the

pre-service teachers the necessity to adjust the lesson plans so, the activities were designed for A1 learners according to the specifications of Guía 22.

The activities were implemented during 18 sessions, 3 hours per week. This project intends to promote the use of the English language. For this reason, there were different sections regarding the English language where a diagnostic helped to have the right ideas for the lesson plans by the use of storytelling and reinforce their knowledge and enrichment of the words in the second language. We intend to promote the use of the language that allows students to feel comfortable in the group about their achievements and the possibilities of expressing their ideas about what they think of the characters or what is happening in the story.

It is important to highlight that learners were exposed to different activities such as: watching videos, describing the main characteristics of shapes, animals, environment, flash-cards with names and colors, feeling gaps, word searches, and coloring activities. Additionally, the three practitioners will implement the first lesson plan using storytelling and they will apply the activities related to stories, once students come back from vacations in July. We consider that it is important to add this information because once students come back from vacations we will implement those activities.

In order to systematize the information and evidence, the professional growth of practitioners through the implementation of the project, the journal, observation, and two activities accounts will be used as an instrument to register and collect data. On the other hand, students' outcomes will be presented through the artifacts used during the implementation, such as worksheets.

### ***6.1 ASSESSMENT STAGE***

According to Giraldo (2018), assessment is purposeful and has an important impact in English language learning and teaching, language assessment allows teachers to measure how much students learned during a course. Moreover, formative assessment has more to do with teaching as it assesses pupils' strengths and weaknesses giving to the instructor the opportunity to reflect on what students need academically. The pre-service teachers implemented the assessment procedure using a formative assessment at the end of each lesson of the didactic unit which is a sequence of eight lessons to teach a specific topic such as: simple present, daily routines, animals, and family members; this, with the goal of encourage learners to perform better by making their performances naturally without the stressful situation of traditional tests in which a student has to face a sheet of paper full of questions. We will assess language by using assessing material focusing on the topic that was taught before as a way for students to have the chance to enjoy the process. We will assess language by using assessing material focusing on the topic that was taught before as way for students to have the chance to enjoy the process.

## **7. REFLECTIVE STAGE**

In this section, we will reflect on the outcomes of our educational proposal both from the point of view of the teacher, and from the point of view of the students' achievements. We will divide this section into strengths and challenges in relation with our own professional growth; also, we will analyze students' results from the point of view of linguistic outcomes in relation with the learning objectives and the results obtained from the affective factors such as motivation, participation and so forth, linked with the particular strategy we were dealing with.

### ***7.1 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT***

From a professional point of view, this was an amazingly interesting and enriching experience, in which we grew as teachers and had the opportunity of enhancing our knowledge and experience with young learners. The challenge of interacting with children, planning and observing the results of our teaching proposal gave us first-hand information and feedback about our strengths as teachers and also revealed aspects we still need to develop.

Professional development, classroom management, and planning are three essential strengths that completely relate to our academic process. At the beginning of each session, we started greeting the students in different ways in order to help them activate their cognitive schemas. Fortunately, the in-service teacher advised us that learners liked to hear stories and painting. Moreover, they already knew some class behaviors before participating in the lesson that were about raising their hand when they wanted to share an idea or say something in class.

Considering that information, we decided to use stories already known by children such as The Little Mermaid, Red Riding Hood and The Three Little Pigs, and it turned out to be a very good decision because learners activated their previous knowledge to cooperate with the different activities done in class and demonstrated engagement during the sessions. We took advantage of stories to teach vocabulary and expressions in simple present that enriched their knowledge of English.

Additionally, we must acknowledge that the in- service teacher's behaviour and experience with the children was very helpful and constructive since it allowed us to observe and learn some classroom management techniques for keeping children in silence at some periods, and that allowed us to have better control of the group and the students' behavior. We will explain in more detail some of those techniques in the following pages.

### ***7.1.1 CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT***

Although, we had had some experience with children in our practicum stage as part of the curriculum of the university degree, classroom management was a little bit complex or deficient and it needed of better techniques to have greater control of the group, whose members were barely adapting to school life;

As teachers in development, we were more familiar with teaching English to older children and adolescents, who need different teaching techniques as well as disciplinary control. In our case, the accompaniment and the participation of the in-service teacher helped us greatly



since we learned from her techniques for managing the group in a dynamic and gentle way; her presence also promoted children's empathy with us. We used stories and personalization to establish empathy with the students and establish our authority in the classroom in a positive way and without overwhelming them.

The in-service teacher always had a role where she gave instructions to children and they were immediately quiet, this helped us to avoid any kind of misbehavior. One of the strategies that worked more effectively, was the in-service teacher's characterization as an evil witch. which helped us to understand that the strategies implemented in these ages should be softer and handled with much more care, strategies in which we as adults place ourselves at the children's level, so, we can relate to them in a more dynamic and constructive way, creating a more effective and productive environment; Evidence of our reflection and learning in relation with this issue can be found in our journal number three where the event is described as follows

*Today, we have learned that there are different ways to be immersed in children world. An example of this is the personification the in-service teacher acted at a particular moment when the environment was noisy because the students were very excited about the story we were telling and it was difficult to hear in the classroom. The teacher, noticing our difficulties to control the group stood up in the middle of the schoolroom and said: "Yo soy la bruja malvada del bosque, todo aquel que hable de aquí en adelante, le esparciré mis polvos mágicos y poderosos, y los convertiré en Calabazas". The children entered in the story and stopped talking immediately less they would turn into pumpkins. This was one of the best strategies we have experienced since it was effective and their attention towards the story was immediately resumed.*

It is always great to see how students are enthusiastic about learning and the activities we carefully prepare for them but once they are noisy and out of control stir in and calm down were alternative examples about what was learned during this classroom project implementation. Sit down, stand up and stretch their body and of course reading an appealing story surely will work.

According to Doyle (1986), the use of this type of techniques reinforce students' behaviors and generates a positive bond with the teacher, he also mentions that the teacher is the first custodian of order in a class and must frequently decide when and how to intervene to repair order. Additionally, he says that decisions to intervene are necessary and most of them decide to intervene on the basis of their knowledge and experience. As novice teachers we still have much to learn in terms of classroom management, an element that is basic for creating a positive learning environment, and we feel really grateful to the in -service teacher for demonstrating practically that it is possible to achieve good results by just empathizing with the students.

One of the things learned during this implementation was that to establish the right rules from the beginning. In order to help organize the participation, we set the rule for students of raising their hands before talking. When the rule was not respected, we had the responsibility to remind students about it; these, in turn, allowed us to have better discipline and therefore to waste less time calling their attention and therefore to have more positive relationships with students and more conducive to learning.

A classroom without discipline and routines makes it difficult for teachers to do their job as students can get distracted, get off of task and disturb other classmates. For those reasons,

classroom management strategies helped to create an organized environment that allows adequate teaching.

McKinney et al. (2005), highlighted the relevance of creating personal interactions with students and how teachers' approach to them, trying to identify any possible disruption, getting this into a successful strategy to control class' discipline. For instance, asking students to work in small groups they understand that each one play a specific role within the group. As teachers in development, we used different strategies of classroom management to reduce misbehavior in the lessons allowing learners to have clear instructions of what they need to do facilitating their learning process.

An example of discipline enforcement that we faced and that we found as evidence in our journal took place while we were telling them The Monkey and the Crocodile story. Students were noisy, they all wanted to talk at the same time when one of the pre-service teachers, in a given scenario asked about "why the crocodile was taking the monkey to the female crocodiles' house?", and another teacher, very calmly and with a soft voice, suggested to all children be silent because they were not listening to what the other children were saying, and reminded them that in order for all of us to participate equally, we had to raise our hands to ask for the floor.

## **7.2 EFFECTIVENESS OF PRESENTATION, PRACTICE AND PRODUCTION**

### **PROCEDURE FOR ORAL PRODUCTION IN BEGINNERS.**

Our preliminary observation of the group, helped us to identify some weaknesses in learners regarding oral comprehension and production of the English language. Bearing this in mind, we decided to implement the Presentation Practice Production technique, also known as PPP, since it is considered as an effective teaching sequence, in which the students are familiarized with the new language, before being given practice in a controlled situation to be prepared for the more open and spontaneous practice at the end of the sequence. This also allowed us to help the students by stimulating their interest and motivation towards English.

Our purpose was to facilitate English oral production considering that the students got very little exposure to the language and even less opportunities for practice of oral skills. We could observe that the implementation of PPP was helpful to provide them the linguistic input to produce words and short sentences.

Lessons were planned according to the PPP procedure. In first place, the presentation of the content was made, in order to contextualize learners through the introduction of basic vocabulary like main characters, objects and colors from the story. Afterwards, the practice step was promoted by involving students in the pronunciation and term-picture relation that can convey the meaning in L1. Lastly, there was a requirement for students' production according to their average level in terms of difficulty.

During each lesson, we dramatized the story, adjusting our voices according to the plot and characters involved in the dialogues to catch learners' attention. Then, we worked with worksheets to reinforce vocabulary and teach new words. Finally, we asked the whole group about the story they had heard. Pupils started to participate and contribute in the class by saying short and effective sentences using English language. The evidence of the effectiveness of this procedure was seen in the linguistic production of the children who began to use the vocabulary presented during the lesson as can be seen in the following sample from our journal.

*Day number 4:* We have presented the vocabulary of the story and then the picture that related or linked to each word. The children were able to make connections incredible fast and it was noticeable when they were able to give us the closest meaning of what the word represented. While the story was told, they were connecting the words given at the beginning and followed the pace of the story. Something to highlight is that at the beginning of the first session students were shy, but once the teachers congratulated them for their participation, all of them wanted to keep sharing more details about any event that happened in the story. This showed us that students like the learning of a second language and this was a great chance to help them to practice in their oral production.

### **7.2.1 Value of praise and self-esteem**

From the motivational viewpoint, we could see how self-image was positively reinforced in the students by congratulating them. One of the problems we have in classrooms is that children

do not want to participate and sometimes it is hard to encourage them to do so; some of the reasons are shyness and lack of confidence. Something we learned during this implementation is that students of second grade were active participants, besides this, the in-service teacher always congratulated their cooperation by giving them a positive verbal and charming feedback. A result of this is that children wanted to keep participating and building up that positive self-esteem. The participation in class is closely related to the self-esteem and it is defined as “the set of evaluative attitudes that a person has about himself or his accomplishments” (Morrison T. and Duane M. 1975, p. 374). Our project helped us understanding how the self-esteem contributes to the awareness of this strategy.

### **7.2.2 STUDENTS’ RESPONSES**

During the lesson implementations it was observed a set of positive and negative students’ responses towards their motivation and emotions. Thus, the responses were divided as strengths and challenges revealed by themselves.

The positive responses that were acknowledged as students’ strengths deal with a constructive learning scenario that was developed in every implementation as they encouraged each other with the meaning of key words learned during the “pre-stage” and through storytelling exposure where their emotions were involved showing empathy to the given context. In this way,

learners participated looking forward to learning new vocabulary about something they were enjoying and that became a known topic.

On the other hand, there were some negative responses that were explicitly showed during some implementations, acknowledged as students' challenges. In view of the students' reactions, it was evidenced a lack of comprehension that led most of them to lose motivation and feel frustration despite their willingness to learn. Some of them, felt disappointed due to the fact that they did not understand many words from the story. Although the plot of the story was clear, they showed interest to catch the meaning of every sentence from the story.

Our purpose was to find out some alternative methods and strategies that allowed us to help students achieve the learning goals. We worked with one observation lesson to analyze students' behavior and followed by seven lessons more that allowed us to interact with the second grade scholars. Besides, we were able to identify children's responses in terms of instructional design. These responses were analyzed having in mind the following elements:

### ***7.2.3 REACTIONS DURING CLASS IMPLEMENTATION***

Through the learners' reactions it was showed that the content to be taught is key and the plausible responses from learners are linked to this content. Thus, we get to the point that content-

based teaching is an optimal approach to provide children a meaningful content where they can relate to authentic settings faced in their daily lives.

Each implemented lesson had images that contextualized students while they were learning new words, this caused a positive reaction from learners for they want to participate all the time, they showed surprise when new words were being pronounced. As shown in our evidences, a relevant aspect that is significant for our project is that pupils become aware of what is being taught and they start using vocabulary learned, mainly during the “post reading” stage and share ideas of the story among themselves. Furthermore, they demonstrated anticipation to the next scene coming up with what character would be the next one to perform. Pupils were used to ask about the story for the next class in view of being prepared to participate, this was the clearest evidence they were really interested in this classroom project.

Students did an outstanding job regarding participation, they demonstrated a high level of awareness since most of the times they raised their hand and waited for the teacher's approval to talk. In spite of these facts, it was observed that something occurred at the moment of starting the “while-reading” stage, there was a challenging scenario due to some students losing focus of the story and trying to distract their classmates.

Although we evidenced and highlighted the students’ encouragement to use the language that is showed in the stories, it was observed that when children produced short utterances in English and wanted to continue with the idea, they just switched the code to Spanish language completing the idea they had in mind. Nation, P (2001) examined the reasons about not to use L2



during the lesson, this deal with a source of embarrassment or lack of self-confidence for shy students and to foster L2, suggested to involve classroom management tasks. As teachers we acknowledged this and congratulated their participation in order to motivate others to give more details with something that had happened in the story. Usually, students asked how they can say a word and we as tutors tried first to work with body language or provided the word or expression when was required. Moreover, we allowed the participation in Spanish and some learners felt more comfortable expressing their ideas.

#### **7.2.4 LANGUAGE LEARNING**

As it was mentioned before, according to the specifications of the Colombian Ministry of Education, students did not reach the level of English required, thus, at the beginning of each lesson we asked students for colors, numbers and family members that they already knew; in some cases, English environment was limited and children just used their mother tongue to express an idea. This, lets us to reflect upon the need that public institutions are going through in terms of scholarship for English as a second language.

Our lessons were designed to help learners start to communicate orally in English if with short utterances and single words and acquire some grammatical elements implicitly. At the end of each lesson we offered them worksheets where they had matching exercises, word searches and coloring activities related to the story. In this way, students could ask questions about the items they learned, share the moral or what they thought about the story. However, it must be

acknowledged that they used Spanish close to 50% of the times they participated in the class. Next we will address this linguistic outcomes in a more detailed way.

### ***7.2.5 LINGUISTIC OUTCOMES***

As will be remembered, the main goal of this project was to enrich and promote the use of the second language oral skills through storytelling. Students' strengths and weaknesses in relation with their linguistic achievements will be described in this section.

#### **STRENGTHS**

The linguistic outcomes of the students were analyzed in relation with the learning objectives established for each lesson plan. Our work with the students and our observations demonstrated that children developed their ability to grasp meaning and reproduce what they understand by using their receptive senses and productive skills. Our observations were focused both on receptive and productive skills since the storytelling was taught sequentially to activate learners' understanding and move them towards the production of linguistic output, which was the project's main goal.

In most of the sessions we documented in our journals, we noticed the majority of kids were predominantly visual learners and enjoyed learning vocabulary related to the story when it was presented along with a picture or just a physical representation that came with pictures or drawings made by the practitioners on the board. The elements of the language that were perceived as learned in our observations included basic vocabulary, such as nouns, verbs and adjectives used to name characters, places, objects, action. Also, they demonstrated knowledge of short expressions contained in the story they were being told and characteristics to describe the mood of the characters in relation to the story.

Evidence to support this observation can be found in the register of our journal related to the Little Mermaid session.

Observation Journal. Session 1. Little Mermaid story.

*“This session has been really engaging and interesting for kids since they got easily immerse in that sea world. They loved to hear the sounds of the water, the name of the characters, the setting of the story and the characters' expressions. They answered readily with the vocabulary of the story to describe appearance and feelings. After having introduced the characters and vocabulary, we asked "How is Triton's face now? Is he happy or angry?", so what they answered was "Angry!". Also, we asked for the physical appearance of the characters like "How does the Little Mermaid look like? Is she beautiful or ugly?", and they answered in chorus "beautiful". It is really encouraging to see how they start to pick up the new vocabulary.”*

To promote understanding of L2 through storytelling was key in our project since we considered that it is important for kids to have the right answer or at least put in practice what they assume that could be correct. Therefore, by getting an extensive exposure to the foreign language learners can build knowledge with specific facts related to the topic. Macaro (2001) added, “teaching entirely through the target language makes the language real, allows learners to experience unpredictability, and develops the learners’ own in-built language system”. Something to highlight from students as a strength was their cooperation, participation and how willing they were to learn. Those are important aspects that allowed us to take advantage of every situation and to develop each lesson plan accordingly on what was planned. Hence, each session had data collected about what was implemented such as video records, pictures, drawings and so on. This helped us to achieve the objectives proposed by observing learners building very short sentences, also, their efforts to pronounce different words.

The way in which children shared, took turns, and compromised with the project are some of the strengths that we as developers of this proposal could acknowledge. These can be seen as social strengths, based on an article published by Morin (2014) who worked as an in-service teacher and as an early intervention specialist for 10 years, she states that:

*"Children have many different kinds of strengths. Sometimes these strengths are obvious, like when a kid is really good at drawing or playing sports. But some strengths can be harder to notice—like being a good listener or working well in groups"*

Another significant point regarding the linguistic strengths children demonstrated was their positive disposition to talk in class, both in English and Spanish in order to participate in discussions about points of view or versions of the story with the teachers and other classmates, and learning words through songs and listening to stories. To support this fact, there is evidence proved in our observation journal.

Observation journal. Session 4. The Tortoise and the Hare story.

*“The fourth implementation was completed with a satisfying linguistic output and the instruments used to collect information about the learners’ progress through the project are demonstrating good results. At this point of our classroom project, there is a fact that we highlight and it has to do with the students’ encouragement to use the language that is showed in the stories in L2. The pupils are not afraid of using simple sentences and nouns taught in an implicit way thanks to storytelling, instead they ask several questions about the pronunciation and meaning of the word in a given context using also L1 when they require it. The results so far are pleasant to what we intend to promote through our project and we are looking forward to increase vocabulary tasks, like more visual aids, that work as input reinforcement to scaffold new content.”*

## **CHALLENGES**

In terms of linguistic challenges presented during the implementation of this classroom project, it could be said that there were evidenced two different situations that helped us to reflect upon those things that went well, some others that did not go well and those that definitely we

would not do the next time. We wondered even before developing this project about the pronunciation aspects that can involve students into the appropriate stress and intonation of the words, but despite every-lesson attempts to raise awareness of pronunciation, students disregard the importance of this and focused their attention on the visual side of this project as they found it funnier. Another challenge faced was the fact that students did not remember the vocabulary learned in previous lessons, so at the moment of recalling prior knowledge just a few pupils were capable of coming up with some nouns and verbs that were introduced in a previous story. Based on our journal, we showed evidence of this difficulty.

Observation journal. Session 3. Little Red Riding Hood story.

*“After the third implementation, we figured out a challenging situation that was noticed previously, related to the students’ engagement towards the stories. The impact occurred at the moment of starting the while reading stage, when students looked at the screen they start discussing about the pictures displayed and immediately talked to each other about the story and that they know about it. A relevant aspect that is significant for our project is that pupils become aware of what is being taught and they start using vocabulary learned at that moment; however, many students do not recall previous vocabulary that has been taught and it was noticed through a set of “refresher questions from past lessons”, where most students refused to answer. Although this is not happening at the fluency that we expected, after each implementation, we consider that the students are catching the main goal of the project, which is to promote the speaking skill.”*

## CONCLUSION

The following paragraphs will report the process and results obtained through the use of storytelling to promote speaking skill in second graders from a state school of the city. Academic resources were consulted to support this project.

The project implemented showed a positive impact of what happen when storytelling is implemented in classrooms especially in young learners and in the educational public sector, which is a challenge that we are going to face as Bilingual facilitators. It was evidenced that the use of Presentation Practice and Production through stories in English language as method was relevant in the kids' learning process. Changing traditional ways of teaching that gave more relevance to students' needs and interests building positive and English environments.

In terms of teaching, this proposal brings the use of appropriate material to enhance learners in the development of their oral skills and enrich their vocabulary in a second language cooperatively in a more effective way.

As pre-service teachers it is relevant to highlight that besides the hindrances we had along the development of this project, we could see that is possible to achieve the educational gaps that we still have in Colombia, for us as practitioners and as developers of this ambitious project. It was worthy to invest our time on this project for the reason that we reached the objectives set since the beginning of it. Finally, we get to the fact that it is possible and achievable, public education needs changes and it was demonstrated that projects like this one would work perfectly if we cope

up the different adversities with motivation and overall, believing and trusting in our upcoming generations that will govern the future.



## REFERENCES

- Dudley, B. (1997). What is storytelling. Retrieved from: <http://www.australianstorytelling.org.au/storytelling-articles/t-z/what-is-storytelling-berice-dudley>
- Gillis, G. (2017). The Importance of Speaking Skills. Retrieved from: <http://www.geraldgillis.com/importance-speaking-skills/>
- Giraldo, F. (2019). Designing language assessment in context: theoretical, technical and institutional considerations. (pp. 123-243) Bogota: HOW
- Harmer, J. (2001). The practice of English language teaching. London: Pearson Education Limited.
- Kayi, H. Teaching speaking: activities to promote speaking in a second language. Retrieved from: The Internet TESL Journal, Vol. XII, No. 11, November 2006 <http://iteslj.org/>
- Khan, S. (2010) Strategies and Spoken Production on Three Oral Communication Tasks: A study of high and low proficiency EFL learners (pp. 16-17)
- Macaro, E. (2001). Analysing student teachers' code-switching in foreign language classrooms: Theories and decision making. The Modern Language Journal, 85(4)

(2) (PDF) TOWARDS AN UNDERSTANDING OF TARGET LANGUAGE USE IN THE EFL CLASSROOM: A REPORT FROM NORWAY. Available from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308413707\\_TOWARDS\\_AN\\_UNDERSTANDING\\_OF\\_TARGET\\_LANGUAGE\\_USE\\_IN\\_THE\\_EFL\\_CLASSROOM\\_A\\_REPORT\\_FROM\\_NORWAY](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/308413707_TOWARDS_AN_UNDERSTANDING_OF_TARGET_LANGUAGE_USE_IN_THE_EFL_CLASSROOM_A_REPORT_FROM_NORWAY) [accessed Jan 24 2020].

Mass, K. (2008) Storytelling as a Strategy to Increase Oral Language Proficiency of Second Language Learners. Retrieved from: <http://teachersinstitute.yale.edu/curriculum/units/2008/2/08.02.01.x.html#h>.

Morin, A. (2014). Building on strengths: types of strengths in kids. Understood ORG US

Morrison, T. L. & Thomas, D. M. (1975) Self-esteem and classroom participation. The Journal of Educational Research, 68, pp 374-377.

McKinney, S., Campbell-Whately, G. D. and Kea, C. D. (2005) Managing Student Behavior in Urban Classrooms: The Role of Teacher ABC Assessments, Vol. 79, no1. pp. 16-20.

Nation, P. (2001) The role of the first language in foreign language learning. Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand. Asian EFL Journal.

Porras, N. (2010). Teaching English through Stories: A Meaningful and Fun Way for Children to Learn the Language. Retrieved from: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262440499\\_Teaching\\_English\\_through\\_Stories\\_A\\_Meaningful\\_and\\_Fun\\_Way\\_for\\_Children\\_to\\_Learn\\_the\\_Language](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/262440499_Teaching_English_through_Stories_A_Meaningful_and_Fun_Way_for_Children_to_Learn_the_Language).

Sharifian, F. & Samani R. (1997). Hierarchical spreading of activation. In F. Sharifian (Ed.) Proc. of the Conference on Language, Cognition, and Interpretation, (pp. 1-10). Isfahan: IAU Press.

Thornbury, S (2005). Ch. 3. How to teach speaking. (pp. 27-40). United Kingdom: Longman Pearson